THE WINDOW

THE SEVEN WORRIES OF TURKEY

A few months ago the Allied newspapers behaved as if Turkey's entry into the war on their side were only a question of days. Yet Turkey has so far neither taken up arms against nor broken off relations with the Axis countries. On March 4 England and America stopped their supply of armaments to Turkey in the hope of achieving by economic pressure that which they had failed to achieve by persuasion. London was especially disappointed and, according to a report by Radio Algiers, Churchill made no attempt to hide his annoyance. Asked whether some captured arms should be sent to Tito's partisans or to Turkey, he replied: "If we give them to the Yugoslavs, they will kill Germans with them. If we give them to the Turks, they will clean them—if they know how. Let's give them to the Yugoslavs."

A Swiss author in Ankara has written about some of the considerations borne in the minds of the Turkish statesmen today.—K.M.

"WE can now permit ourselves to safeguard our today as well as our tomorrow and to prepare for our children in new Turkey a better future than the past has been." With these proud words the "father of the Turks," Kemal Pasha Ataturk, started the period of reconstruction of a modern young power after the peace treaty of Lausanne in 1923 on the ruins of the old Ottoman Empire. This period of reconstruction has lasted now for more than twenty years, and the world knows that the results have been imposing. For years the Turkish Republic has been a factor of stability of the first rank in the turbulent Southeast, and since the outbreak of war she has been a much-courted power.

With great skill Turkey has succeeded so far in steering a safe course through the dangers threatening a neutral power in a world war. Her leaders, above all such men as Inönü and Saracoglu, are cool, expert calculators. They know the weak points of Turkey, and when they count them off they arrive at seven problems, seven factors which cause them anxiety.

The first of these factors is the military one. Turkey has rearmed, she has not let the breathing space granted her since the outbreak of war pass by idly. Vast quantities of modern arms have entered the country as a result of the Lend-Lease policy, chiefly machine guns, heavy artillery, and coastal defense boats. On the other hand, there is still a shortage of tanks and planes—and especially of sufficiently trained flying personnel. That is the first worry.

The second is of a diplomatic nature. For some time the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union were not as cordial as they might have been. However, since Inönü's conference in Cairo has placed these relations on a better footing, this second "great unknown" has receded somewhat in importance. The inimitable skill of Turkish diplomacy, which has always managed to maintain more or less good relations with Germany and her allies, is regarded with justification by all Turks as a guarantee that unlooked-for disasters will not befall the country. Nevertheless, there are enough focal points of trouble along the borders of the country to warrant ceaseless watchfulness.

Then there is—worry number three—the wave of agitation running through the Moslem world. In the southeast, Turkey borders on the French mandate of Syria, and all that happens there is of concern to Ankara. The mighty movement aiming at the creation of a Pan-Arabian union, which has seized all North Africa and the entire Orient, has not met with an entirely favorable regard in Ankara; for the formation of a powerful bloc of states directly adjoining Turkey would give rise to many new problems. Many Turks would rather see a Pan-Islamic cultural movement, in which—in contrast to the Pan-Arabian union—they would also have a word or two to say. But such a movement, in turn, is opposed by the British because of the Mohammedans in India.

On Turkey's northwestern border begins the witches' cauldron of the Balkans. The

Turkish Government's sincere desire to find stable and quiet conditions there among its immediate neighbors, conditions which would make normal neighborly communications and commerce possible, is Ankara's problem number four, perhaps at the moment the most serious of the country's seven worries.

The fifth worry is provided by the Straits of the Bosporus and Dardanelles. For eight years Turkey has exerted full, autonomous control and police authority over this tremendously important focal point of political and military ambitions, this strategic key position of the first rank. And although this solution of the Conference of Montreux in July 1936 does full justice to the Turkish point of view, it has burdened Turkey with a great responsibility. In war time such a responsibility, especially at so ticklish a point on the map, may turn into very much of a two-edged sword.

The situation is not much different as regards the Dodecanese islands off the west coast of Turkey, an Italian possession now occupied by the Germans. These islands represent the most important territorial demands which Turkey might raise at a future peace conference. The Turks know that, in the event of their entry into the war on the Allied side, they might easily be threatened from there by flank attacks. This, too, is a serious worry.

Seventh and last, there are domestic political problems which must not be underestimated. Forced like all other neutral countries to the greatest possible economic self-sufficiency since the outbreak of the war, Turkey has been industrializing herself at a rapid speed and is now producing machinery, railway carriages, tools, textiles, indeed, even motors and certain chemicals. This has made it a great deal easier for her to carry on during the war years. But it is very uncertain whether these young industries, now being supported artificially, will be able to live and compete in a world of normal peace-time trade. Turkey will probably be forced after the war to undertake a large-scale economic reorganization and operations of adjustment. That this will not be possible without social convulsions and economic crises is generally acknowledged today. Furthermore, the Government is planning far-reaching measures of aid for the "distressed areas" of Anatolia, the earthquake regions—one of the most urgent internal problems of the country. The population of entire valleys which are particularly often threatened is to be resettled, and one whole district is to be evacuated; where this is not possible, solid, one-storied stone houses are to replace the flimsy peasant huts: a large and tremendously important emergency program that may in future save the lives of hundreds of thousands. The population problems caused by the ever-recurring earthquakes are also among the great worries of the Turkish statesmen.

It is indeed a proof of the sober realism which determines the political "climate" in Ankara today that all intelligent minds in Turkey clearly realize these seven great worries and are discussing them without any false illusions.—B.B.

REHABILITATION IN FRANCE

The following report, written by a neutral observer in Vichy, throws an interesting light on economic developments in France since the Armistice.—K.M.

THREE and a half years ago, France was faced by complete collapse and a condition bordering on anarchy. As far as the financial situation is concerned, however, she has recovered from this disaster comparatively quickly thanks to the immediate commencement of reconstruction work—which deserves praise regardless of any political prejudice—and thanks to her innate wealth. Of course, it must be admitted that the long duration of the war and the continued destruction have hindered this work of rehabilitation in financial, economic, and social respects.

The best example of this rehabilitation, begun but impeded, is supplied by the figures of the national budget. For 1940, the year of the Battle of France and her defeat, there are no figures whatever, a normal budget being out of the question at that time. Even at the beginning of 1941, the Government did not dare to draw up budget estimates for more than three months at a time, since it seemed quite impossible to predict the course revenues would take. But in the summer of 1941 it was already possible to draw up a regular annual budget. And since then Government expenditure